

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 JUSE-00 SEC-01 SS-15 NSC-05

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P 091725Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4402

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 3356

DEPT. PASS JUSTICE FOR U.S. ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT
OF NEW YORK

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS

SUBJECT: WILKINS/VESCO STORY

REF: SAN JOSE 3312

1. FOLLOWING IS ENGLISH VERSION OF ACTING PAO'S LETTER
TO EXCELSIOR (PUBLISHED JULY 9) IN RESPONSE TO THAT PAPER'S
LATEST CHAPTER OF WILKINS/VESCO STORY.

2. QUOTE: DEAR MR. EDITOR: I WRITE WITH REFERENCE TO
THE JULY 7 ARTICLE IN EXCELSIOR ON THE SUPPOSED "SWORN
DECLARATION" OF MR. JAMES WILKINS MADE SOMEWHERE IN
THE UNITED STATES (IT IS UNCLEAR AT WHOSE BEHEST OR
PRODDING THIS DOCUMENT HAS APPEARED, BUT IT MAY EASILY
BE SUPPOSED). THIS LETTER ALSO CONCERNS WILKINS' MISSION
IN COSTA RICA, AND THE ALLEGATIONS THAT EXCELSIOR
PERSISTS IN PRINTING ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT
IN THIS MATTER IN SPITE OF THE EMBASSY'S RECENT PUBLIC
STATEMENTS.

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THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK HAS INFORMED THE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THIS EMBASSY THAT EXCELSIOR'S CHARGES THAT MR. WILKINS' MAY 21 DECLARATION IN NEW YORK WAS GIVEN "UNDER PRESSURE" IS "INEXACT," CONTAINS "IMPORTANT OMISSIONS," OR REPRESENTS AN EFFORT TO "CONFUSE AND COVER UP THE FACTS," IS PATENTLY FALSE, AS IS SO MUCH OF WHAT HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE SO-CALLED "INVESTIGATIVE SERIES".

MR. WILKINS VOLUNTEERED ALL THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THAT DECLARATION, WHICH HE SIGNED FREELY ON MAY 21 -- REGARDLESS OF ANYTHING HE MAY HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO SAY SUBSEQUENTLY. WITH RESPECT TO EXCELSIOR'S CHARGE THAT REFERENCES TO A KIDNAP OR ASSASSINATION PLOT WERE DELIBERATELY OMITTED FROM THE MAY 21 DECLARATION, WE CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO WILKINS' SPECIFIC STATEMENT THAT IT WAS "TOTALLY UNTRUE" THAT SUCH PLANS WERE EVEN DISCUSSED AS A POSSIBILITY WITH U.S. OFFICIALS. WITH REGARD TO THE FINAL ARTICLE IN YOUR SERIES, IT IS REplete WITH FALSEHOODS, OMISSIONS, HALF-TRUTHS, AND INSULTS THAT REFER TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES, THIS EMBASSY, AND INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS THEREOF, INCLUDING THE AMBASSADOR. THIS TYPE OF JOURNALISM IS NOT WORTHY OF FURTHER CONSIDERATION OR MORE DETAILED REPLY BY THE EMBASSY OR BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES. AS YOUR READERS BY NOW HAVE SURMISED, THE ENTIRE SERIES OBVIOUSLY IS PART OF AN ONGOING, ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN BEING WAGED BY AND FOR A NOTED FUGITIVE FROM U.S. JUSTICE. WE REGRET VERY MUCH THAT EXCELSIOR HAS LENT ITSELF TO SUCH A CAMPAIGN. THIS LETTER, LIKE THE PREVIOUS LETTERS OF THE EMBASSY SPOKESMAN, REPRESENTS THE POSITION OF THE CHIEF OF MISSION, THE U.S. EMBASSY IN SAN JOSE, AND INDEED OF THE ENTIRE U.S. GOVERNMENT. IN THE INTEREST OF FAIRNESS TO YOUR READERS AND OF JOURNALISTIC BALANCE, WE REQUEST THAT IT BE PUBLISHED. SINCERELY (SIGNED) CONRAD STOLZENBACH, ACTING PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER UNQUOTE. TODMAN

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